

COMMEMORATING WORLD AIDS DAY

(Ms. BASS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BASS of California. Mr. Speaker, every 9 minutes and 30 seconds someone is infected with HIV in the United States. Today, 34 million people worldwide live with HIV, and of those infected, 60 percent do not know they are positive. These staggering facts demand that we strengthen our efforts to prevent the spread of this life-threatening disease.

Tomorrow, December 1, we will recognize World AIDS Day. World AIDS Day is an opportunity to take action and invigorate the global movement to ultimately halt the spread of HIV. Emphasizing the importance of ending this three-decade fight, this year's World AIDS Day theme is "Getting to Zero." Zero new infections, zero discrimination, zero AIDS-related deaths.

In observance, starting at midnight, I will hold a 24-hour "tweet-blast" where every hour I will tweet facts about HIV/AIDS and ways everyone can get involved to help end this disease. I invite all of you to join me in this conversation on Twitter at Rep KAREN BASS.

THE HIGH COST OF THE AMERICAN ENERGY POLICY

(Mr. FLEMING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, as the price of crude oil again moves past \$100 a barrel, it is another reminder of the high cost of our energy policy that increases our dependence on foreign countries, kills jobs, and raises energy costs. Every time the Federal Government imposes a moratorium or new regulations, as it did on drilling in the gulf and now the Keystone pipeline, it hurts the American people.

Despite 60 years of a spotless safety record, excellent State regulation and monitoring, approval for safety by the EPA and creation of inexpensive energy sources, hydrofracking for oil and natural gas is under attack by the Department of the Interior.

What is the expected outcome?

Look at what the administration has done to coal, offshore drilling and the Keystone pipeline, not to mention the fact that we have not built a nuclear energy plant or a new refinery for decades due to over-regulation.

Hydrofracking of oil and natural gas will inevitably be pushed into red tape, higher cost of production and lower yield, again, hurting America through high energy costs and fewer jobs.

PENN STATE PRIDE

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the hardship of all those involved in the recent tragic developments at Penn State University is heavy on our hearts as this community moves forward and these individuals and their families continue to cope with the horrific adversity and pain.

Despite these tragic events, I rise today for a different reason, something my community, the Penn State community, can be most proud of. The Chronicle of Higher Education recently reported that Penn State leads the Nation in outgoing faculty Fulbright grants for the 2011-2012 academic year. Penn State has received a total of 16 grants, 14 of which were awarded at the University Park Campus in State College.

The Fulbright Program, a program of competitive, merit-based grants for students, teachers and other professionals, is the U.S. government's premier international educational exchange program. These individuals will go on to expand our Nation's educational endeavors by strengthening partnerships with other leading institutions around the world.

These success stories also serve as an encouraging example that every individual can achieve their potential through hard work and dedication. These talented individuals have much to be proud of. Congratulations to each recipient on this esteemed award.

THIRD ANNUAL NATIONWIDE DRUG TAKE-BACK DAY

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the combined efforts of government at all levels, law enforcement personnel, nonprofit groups, local businesses, and community volunteers as part of the third nationwide Drug Take-Back Day on October 29.

My home of Bucks County has emerged as a regional leader in the prior Take-Back events, so it came as no surprise that despite the unusual fall storm, we led the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in collecting nearly 2 tons of unwanted prescription drugs. Due to the efforts of all involved, these drugs have been removed from our community and no longer pose a threat to public safety or to the environment.

I applaud the successful cooperation of government and members of the community in keeping these drugs off our streets and out of the hands of those who may seek to abuse them, and encourage continued efforts.

STANDING AGAINST VOTER OPPRESSION

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted to join my colleague, Congressman CLAY. And before I do that, let me rise as well to express my support for the Gabe Zimmerman legislation that we will address today and pay tribute to his bravery and certainly his loss.

We come to the floor today as partners with many in this Congress against voter intimidation and to speak on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus, to collaborate with our many friends across the caucuses and across the interests in the Democratic Caucus, and certainly we hope to include our friends on the other side of the aisle.

Since the 2010 election, over 40 States have implemented voter ID, voter suppression laws. Madam Speaker, we are not against knowing who is voting, but we are against turning back the clock of what the Voting Rights Act attempted to do some 40-plus years ago when before that time a poll tax was utilized, or asking those from the African American community how many jelly beans were in a jar.

Just recently, I sent a letter to the U.S. Attorney's Office regarding voter intimidation and voter oppression. We rise today to say that we will stand against such oppression and ask the Justice Department to not clear voter ID laws.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the need to protect democracy, to protect the voice of the American people, and to ensure the right to vote continues to be treated as a right under the Constitution rather than being treated as privilege.

I am joined by my colleagues here today to call on all Americans of good faith to reject and denounce tactics that have absolutely no place in our democracy. We call on African-Americans, Hispanic and Latin Americans, and Asian-American voters to stand strong and learn their voting rights granted by law and the Constitution. We call on these citizens to stand against harassment and intimidation, to vote in the face of such adversity. The most effective way to curb tactics of intimidation and harassment is to vote. Is to stand together to fight against any measures that would have the effect of preventing every eligible citizen from being able to vote. Voting ensures active participation in democracy.

Instances of voter intimidation are not long ago and far away. Just last year I sent a letter to U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder to draw his attention to several disturbing instances of voter intimidation that had taken place in Houston. In a single week there were at least 15 reports of abuse of voter rights throughout the city of Houston.

As a Senior Member of the House Judiciary Committee, I called for an immediate investigation of these instances. Many of these incidents of voter intimidation were occurring in predominately minority neighborhoods and have been directed at African-Americans and Latinos. It is unconscionable to think that anyone would deliberately employ the use of such forceful and intimidating tactics to undermine the fundamental, Constitutional right to vote.